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Sonnet to Lake Cayuga.

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Sonnet to Lake Cayuga.

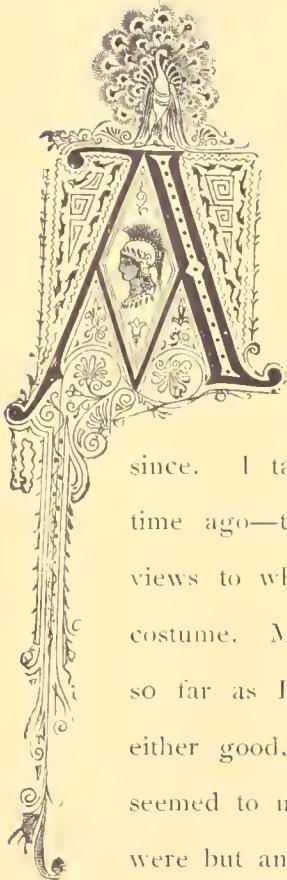
by Fred Letterie



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1894

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THE COURIER PRINTING CO.
SENECA FALLS, N. Y.



BOUT fifteen years ago, this little tribute to Lake Cayuga was first published in the Seneca County Courier. It has appeared in the press of the vicinity at intervals more or less frequently since. I take pleasure in following a suggestion made some time ago—that of gathering together a few of the delightful views to which it refers, and appareling it in a more sylvan costume. My only apology for sending it forth is that nothing—so far as I have been able to learn—has ever been written, either good, bad or indifferent, about our beautiful lake. It seemed to me that it merited something, even though the effort were but an indifferent one.

F. T.

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ALL ablaze is the west—the sun now declining
Bathes golden the clouds hovering light over there :
On yon hillside thy hamlet, fair Cayuga, inclining
Dips downward and touches thy mirrored face fair—
Bright steeple and housetop, gleaming gable and home,
Transplendent in halo of sunset's bright sheen,
The picture inverted on chrysolite dome
And naught but the film of thy waters between.

Different from the expressionistic style of the first two, this painting is more traditional in its composition and style. The artist has used a light, pale color palette, with the background being a pale yellow. The main subject is a large, dark green tree on the right side of the frame. In the foreground, there is a small, simple building with a light-colored roof and walls. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.





Ó H, queen of fair lakes !
thy horizon is fading
Into azure of distance
iridescent with rose :
Canoga afar the Great Manitou's shading
Mantles Red Jacket's birthplace
in twilight's repose.

Oh, link of the past ! beckon sachem and warrior,
Bring halcyon days when they roamed here at will,
The tribes of the Indian, the tents of thy people
That gave thee the name that clings to thee still.



CAYUGA! 'tis then as shadows descending
The wayfarer gathers the spell of thy charms:
CDarkness glides from the marshes with purple shades blending,
Ghostly sedges and flagtops melt in night's dewy arms;
Light plays on the gloom—the past on the present—
The dusky tribes gather as phantoms to roam—
Happy Hunting Grounds theirs—a Great Spirit has sent—
We're but intruders: this realm is their home.





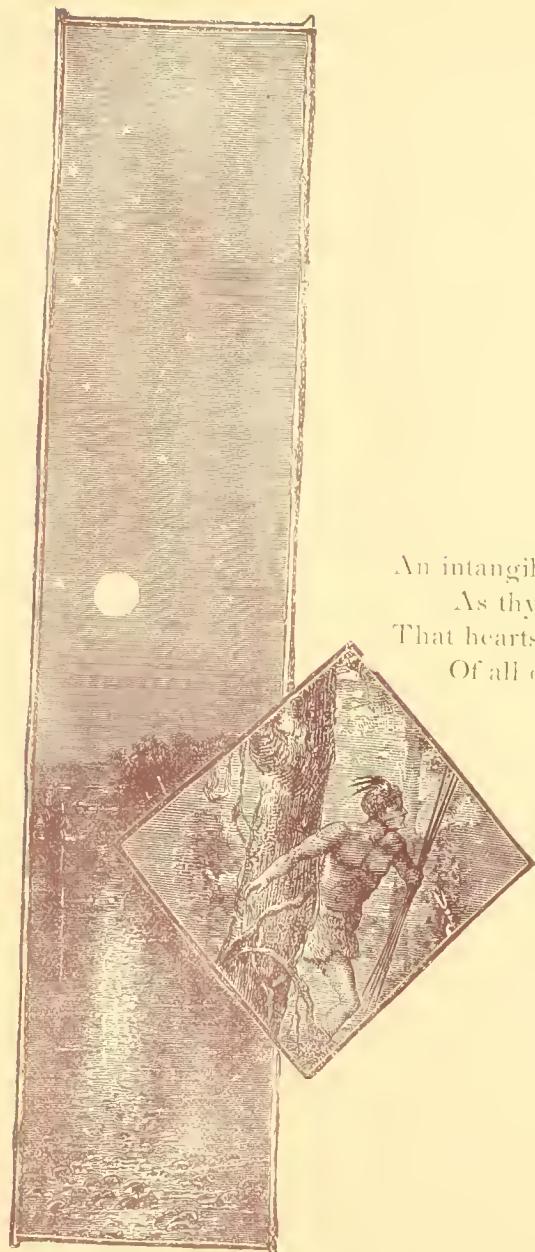


STAY, sweet enchantress! cast not thy netting,
Shut not the gates of this paradise fair:
Earth hath no pearl in such a beautiful setting
That the heavens for the night garner into its care.
Break not the spell; thy legends weave into
The charm that you hold on the hearts you have won:
At night's portals we linger loath to have thee depart,
A sweet summer idyl, a day almost done.





*S*OMBRE night gathers 'round the day beams expiring,
We put out the sconce with the last vesper prayer:
Then merged with thy waters, or with thee retiring,
Is lost in the night or blends with the air—



An intangible something of words yet unspoken—

As thy bosom lies fair showing stars silvery sheen—
That hearts can't express but our soul's thrills betoken,
Of all our lakes beautiful, thou art the Queen.

1740

W 44



